

## Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 SAB-01 AF-06 MMO-01 SAJ-01

/101 W

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P R 090750Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5205

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

USCINCPAC

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 5262

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK, BG, UR

SUBJ: CHAVAN ON GOI FOREIGN POLICY; SEEKS FRIENDLY  
TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES

REF: (A) NEW DELHI 5245 (NOTAL), (B) NEW DELHI 4986 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: CONCLUDING THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUDGET  
DEBATE IN THE LOK SABHA ON APRIL 8, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTER Y.B. CHAVAN EMPHASIZED INDIA'S REGIONAL  
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RELATIONS. HE CHASTIZED BOTH BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN.

THE MINISTER DESCRIBED RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AS EXCELLENT, AND ASSERTED INDIA WANTED FRIENDLY BILATERAL TIES WITH THE USA. SALIENT PORTIONS FROM CHAVAN'S REMARKS AS REPORTED BY THE PRESS AND SAMACHAR WIRE SERVICE FOLLOW:

1. THE MINISTER SAID THAT THE DIFFICULTY WITH THE UNITED STATES WAS THAT WHILE INDIA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS WERE CONFINED TO THE COUNTRY, THE NATIONAL INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES COVERED THE GLOBE. AS FAR AS US NATIONAL INTERESTS AS REFLECTED IN GLOBAL POLICY WERE CONCERNED, "WE COME INTO CONFLICT". (THE APRIL 3 MEA REPORT SAYS THERE IS NO CONFLICT OF NATIONAL INTERESTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.) "DESPITE THAT THERE ARE AREAS WHERE WE CAN COOPERATE. THEREFORE WE ARE MAKING EFFORTS OF IMPROVING OUR RELATIONS". REFERRING TO DIEGO GARCIA, CHAVAN REPORTEDLY SAID "THERE IS A DANGER TO FREE COUNTRIES FROM THE INDIAN OCEAN". THE MINISTER ADDED THAT INDIA HAD EXPRESSED ITSELF AGAINST THE BUILD-UP OF A US MILITARY BASE THERE, BUT EXPLAINED INDIA COULD NOT MAKE IT A BILATERAL ISSUE SINCE LITTORAL COUNTRIES HAVE PASSED RESOLUTIONS AND FORMED AD HOC COMMITTEES TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM. THE MINISTER SAID HE TOLD AMERICAN LEADERS THAT INDIA DID NOT LIKE WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN DIEGO GARCIA. HE ALSO SAID THE DANGERS AND CHALLENGES AROUND THE COUNTRY HAD BECOME A REALITY, AND INDIA NEEDED TO FACE THESE MATTERS WITH HER OWN STRENGTH.

3. CHAVAN DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO BANGLADESH. HE RECOUNTED INDIA'S CHAGRIN OVER THE ASSASSINATION OF SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN, BUT SAID THE GOI CONSIDERED THIS AN INTERNAL MATTER AND CONTINUED TO ESPOUSE COOPERATION. UNFORTUNATELY, CHAVAN CONTINUED, THE RESPONSE HAD NOT SO FAR BEEN POSITIVE, AND IN CERTAIN MATTERS IT WAS EVEN NEGATIVE. CHAVAN ASSERTED THE BANGLADESH HIS INITIALLY ALLEGED INDIA WAS POISED FOR MILITARY ACTION, AND WHEN SUCH CHARGES WERE PROVED BASELESS THEY SHIFTED TO OTHER ISSUES LIKE FARAKKA. THE MINISTER REGRETTEED ATTEMPTS TO CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERNATIONALIZE THIS "SMALL" ISSUE WHICH WAS NOW A VEHICLE FOR LAUNCHING ANTI-INDIAN PROPAGANDA. CHAVAN SAID SUCH ISSUES WOULD ONLY HELP THOSE COUNTRIES WHO WERE ADVERSELY INTERESTED IN THE REGION AND THEY WOULD SEEK TO EXPLOIT IT. HE HOPED BANGLADESH WOULD GIVE UP ITS UNREALISTIC DEMAND ON FARAKKA AND THE PEOPLE OF BANGLADESH WOULD RESPOND TO INDIA IN A MOOD OF COOPERATION.

4. TURNING TO PAKISTAN, THE MINISTER SAID THAT MR BHUTTO NEVER MISSED AN OPPORTUNITY TO BRAND INDIA AN EXPANSIONIST COUNTRY. CHAVAN SAID THE SIMLA AGREEMENT PROVIDED THE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF DIFFERENCES WITHOUT THIRD PARTY PARTICIPATION. THE MINISTER SAID THE PROCESS WAS HALTED AND "IN TROUBLE" BECAUSE SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS STARTED FLOWING INTO PAKISTAN. ANTI-INDIAN PROPAGANDA FROM ISLAMABAD AND PAKISTAN INDIFFERENCE ON TRADE MATTERS WERE ALSO MENTIONED AS NEGATIVE FACTORS.

5. CHAVAN DESCRIBED INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS AS VERY GOOD. REPORTEDLY HE SAID "IT IS AN EXCELLENT RELATIONSHIP, A VERY WARM RELATIONSHIP". BREZHNEV'S REFERENCES TO INDIA AT THE 25TH SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS, AND SOVIET SUPPORT OF INDIA IN DIFFICULT TIMES CONFIRMED THE TIES. THE MINISTER ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT INDIA DOES NOT SUPPORT THE SOVIET UNION IN EVERY MATTER. THE GOI, NONETHELESS, CONTINUED TO LOOK TO FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN THE RELATIONS, CHAVAN SAID, AND CONTENDED THE CURRENT VISIT OF THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION TO THE SOVIET UNION "WILL NOT ONLY STRENGTHEN OUR RELATIONS, BUT STRENGTHEN INDIA".

6. THE MINISTER SAID THAT INDIA WAS MAKING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH CHINA. HE HOPED THERE WOULD BE SOME RESPONSE TO THAT EFFORT. "IN DON'T WANT TO SAY ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT. THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT CHINA'S POLICY TOWARDS US HAS CHANGED BUT CERTAINLY WE SHOULD MAKE EFFORTS."

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7. COMMENT: CHAVAN'S COMMENTS ON INDO-US RELATIONS ARE IN KEEPING WITH THE PRESENT LOW PROFILE APPROACH EACH COUNTRY IS FOLLOWING BUT STRIKE A REASONABLY POSITIVE NOTE. WE NOTE THE MINISTER REAFFIRMED INDIA'S TRADITIONAL POSITION THAT DIEGO GARCIA IS A MULTILATERAL AND NOT A BILATERAL ISSUE. THE DEFENCE MINISTER WE CONCLUDE WAS NOT SIGNALING A NEW DIRECTION IN HIS APRIL 6 SPEECH (REFTEL A). WE FIND CHAVAN FIRM ON FARAKKA AND THE SIMLA RPROCESS. HE IS LESS SEVERE TOWARD BANGLADESH THAN PAKISTAN, BUT ONLY BY DEGREE. THE SPEECH PROVIDES NO INDICATION THAT THE GOI IS IN ANY HURRY TO RESUME THE SIMLA PROCESS. THERE IS SOME EFFORT TO BE EVEN HANDED IN DESCRIBING TIES WITH THE SOVIETS, BUT THE MINISTER IS FAR MORE LAUDATORY THAN CRITICAL IN SPEAKING OF MOSCOW. THE

REFERENCE TO EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH CHINA  
IS INTRIGUING IN LIGHT OF REPORTS THAT THE GOI PLANS  
TO NOMINATE AN AMBASSADOR TO PEKING. CHAVAN IS  
APPARENTLY PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCE-  
MENT OF THAT EVENT.  
SCHNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

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